

THE MILITANT

SWP CAMPAIGN STATEMENT
Solidarity with miners in Turkey!
No worker has to die on the job!
 — PAGE 9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE VOL. 86/NO. 40 OCTOBER 31, 2022

Rail workers continue fight against boss, gov't attacks

BY JOE SWANSON

LINCOLN, Neb. — Some 115,000 rail workers across the country are debating their future as they vote on proposed new contracts, which will determine if there will be a strike.

The members of the two largest unions, with 60,000 members — the Transportation Division of the Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers (SMART-TD) and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen — are beginning to cast votes on tentative agreements that won't be counted for weeks. One of the other larger unions, the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees, voted down its contract and is back in negotiations.

Rail workers have been the target of decades of unrelenting attacks, as bosses seek to slash workers and heap longer, more onerous schedules on those who remain, as well as new punitive attendance policies, making rail labor increasingly dangerous and draining.

Continued on page 6

Iran protests keep growing as students, workers join

BY SETH GALINSKY

Despite brutal attacks by police, the Iranian regime's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and its Basij thugs, and the arrests of thousands, daily protests across Iran have continued for more than 30 days and are still going strong.

The protests began after Mahsa Amini, a young Kurdish woman visiting Tehran, died Sept. 16 three days after she collapsed following her detention by the "morality" police, who enforce the bourgeois clerical regime's reactionary dress code for women.

Starting out as protests against the death of Amini and the oppression of women, these actions also reflect anger over attacks on democratic rights, the condition of oppressed minorities, and the impact on working people of the capitalist economic crisis and the regime's military adventures across the Middle East.

Nothing the regime has done has been able to stop the protests. Students

Continued on page 7

Moscow out of Ukraine now! Back Ukraine independence!

Kyiv's sovereignty rests on its working class



Militant/Michael Barker

Rally in Vancouver, British Columbia, Oct. 16 by 300 supporters of Ukrainian independence. Putin's terror bombing of Ukraine cities is deepening opposition across Russia.

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Moscow's deadly bombardment of Kyiv and other cities, targeting civilians as well as infrastructure needed for heat and power, has done nothing to deter the willingness of Ukrainians to defend their homeland. Kyiv's forces continue to press to retake areas in the southeast seized by Moscow, while Russian President Vladimir Putin's battlefield losses and his mobilization of reservists has deepened the unpopularity of the war at home.

Putin said Oct. 14 that 16,000 men — utterly unprepared — had already been rushed to the front lines. Families are forced to buy clothes and equipment for conscripted relatives. A number of the poorly trained workers in uniform were killed or captured within days.

"Kamikaze" drones made in Iran hit

As 2022 vote looms, Democratic Party ramps up attacks on constitutional rights

BY TERRY EVANS

With just three weeks before midterm elections, Democrats are ratcheting up their anti-Donald Trump crusade to a fever pitch, with more televised congressional show trial hearings into the Jan. 6, 2021, melee at the Capitol and the House select committee's subpoena of the former president.

This follows President Joseph Biden's vilification last month of tens of millions of "MAGA Republicans" as "semi-fascists" and a "clear and present danger," and the government's claim that the FBI raid on Trump's Mar-a-Lago home was a pressing matter of "national security."

Both the FBI operations against

Continued on page 9

Kyiv and other cities at rush hour Oct. 17. Specialists from Tehran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps were sent to Moscow-occupied areas to train Russian troops how to fire the drones. The

Continued on page 6

Inflation, slow-up in production deepen crisis for working people

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Rising prices are having a devastating impact on workers' lives in the U.S., across the advanced capitalist world and, especially, in the semi-colonial countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, with no end in sight. The capitalist crisis increasingly involves a slowdown in production, trade and jobs, which threatens economic contraction alongside crippling inflation.

U.S. consumer prices rose to 8.2% for the 12 months ending in September, but prices for food, energy, housing and medical care — a big part of the budget for working people — went up much

Continued on page 9

Vote Socialist Workers Party! Back rail workers, Iran protests



Militant/Eric Simpson

Joel Britton, left, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of California, discusses politics with protester while campaigning at Iran solidarity rally of 2,000 in San Francisco Oct. 9.

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

In the final couple of weeks leading up to elections, candidates of the Socialist Workers Party are campaigning to get out news of key strikes and working-class battles worldwide and presenting the party's program. And they are introducing working people to the *Militant* and books published by Pathfinder.

In Cincinnati, Jacquie Henderson, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress, spoke with rail workers at the CSX

yard Oct. 13. Some workers were already familiar with the *Militant* and its coverage of the rail unions' fight against boss and government attacks from an earlier visit by campaign supporters, but for most it was the first time they saw a copy of the paper or met Henderson.

The conductors, machinists, and track workers there told her and campaign supporter John Hawkins that they were from several differ-

Continued on page 3

Inside

Berkeley groups ban all speakers who defend Israel's right to exist 2

UK rulers, in political crisis, aim attacks at working class 4

—On the picket line, p. 5—

U.S. Steel workers rally in fight for new national contract

San Francisco airport strikers win victory, gain wage raise

1,000 march against arsenic emissions by Quebec smelter

BY JIM YATES

ROUYN-NORANDA, Quebec — One thousand people of all ages, including many children, marched here Sept. 23 to protest emissions of arsenic by the Horne copper smelter located in the town. The march was led by a banner that read in French, “Our lives are worth more than their profits.”

The central demand was 3 nanograms of arsenic per cubic meter of air as soon as possible, within a maximum of five years. Presently the norm for arsenic in Quebec is 3 nanograms but the smelter is allowed to emit 100. Its permit is due for revision in November. The government and the company reached agreement in September to lower the level to 15 in five years.

Rouyn-Noranda is a mining town of 43,000 in northern Quebec over 600 kilometers (372 miles) north of Montreal. The smelter, which employs 650, belongs to Glencore, a major mining company based in Switzerland. It was built in 1927 along with a copper mine that closed in 1976. The foundry now recycles and refines materials, emitting many heavy metals dangerous to health.

The union representing the 400 production workers in the smelter, the Confederation of National Trade Unions, held a press conference Oct. 6 to explain its stand. “We must attain the threshold of 15 nanograms per cubic meter by the summer of 2027 at the latest,” said union President Stephane Larente, “and we have to continue to work to reach the national (Quebec) norm of 3 nanograms per cubic meter of air.” The union called for elected officials to make public each

year the progress made by the smelter. Provincial Premier Francois Legault visited the town Sept. 29, threatening, “If a majority of the population wants to close the plant, we’ll close the plant.”

Larente answered, “We must stop opposing jobs and the environment and dividing the population.”

Studies made public by the region’s Public Health entities in the past several years show that children in Rouyn had four times more arsenic in their bodies than those of Amos, about 45 miles away. The town has 30% more lung cancers, 50% more chronic pulmonary diseases and 25% more babies born with low weight than elsewhere in Quebec.

Martin Corvec, a plumber who works as a subcontractor in the smelter, spoke to the *Militant* at the march. “I do work in the plant, but that’s not a reason not to be here. I work in there with a big mask while on the other side of the fence there are women with their carriage and baby who are jogging. The moose we hunt, they tell us not to eat the organs.”

Emilie Robert, a march organizer, told the *Militant* her first child was born prematurely weighing roughly 4 pounds, while the second was full term at over 8 pounds. She had moved further out of town for the second pregnancy. “That and my concern for the population as a whole is why I am involved,” she said.

Nicole Desgagnes, a march organizer and spokesperson for ARET (Stop the Discharges and Toxic Emissions), said, “I was a nurse and then health care administrator before retiring, and I knew nothing about this. The premier is the only one brandishing the threat of plant closure. It’s to divide people. If they



Militant/Katy LeRougetel

Protest against dangerous arsenic emissions by Horne copper smelter in Rouyn-Noranda, Quebec, Sept. 23. Sign in the center reads “Money has no smell. Arsenic doesn’t either!”

stopped processing the most toxic materials, the arsenic levels would drop.”

Ritha Doyon, a cleaner who lives right by the smelter, told this worker-correspondent when I knocked on her door, “Our opinion isn’t worth s--t, our health neither. I worked in there for four years. My nose ran, I had headaches as soon as I went in. As for me, they should close it until they attain the 3 [nanograms].”

Others in the town don’t agree. Diane Allard, who lives down the street from the foundry, said, “I’ve lived here all my life. I have three children, eight grandchildren and there is not one who is sick.”

Teaching assistants at the University of Quebec in Abitibi-Temiscamingue and professors at the local college joined the march. Jean-Sebastien Blais was

at the march representing the Abitibi-Temiscamingue region of the Nurses Union of Quebec.

“I support the fight of working people of Rouyn-Noranda against the destruction of their health,” Katy LeRougetel, Communist League candidate in Montreal’s riding of Anjou-Louis Real and member of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union, said as she joined the protest in solidarity. “We can have no confidence in the bosses and their government. The workers and their unions must be at the center of protecting their health and safety and that of those who live around the smelter. It is wrong to oppose jobs and the environment. Workers can come together and find a solution that protects both.”

Berkeley groups ban all speakers who defend Israel’s right to exist

BY SETH GALINSKY

Nine student groups at the University of California’s Berkeley School of Law adopted bylaws in August promoted by Law Students for Justice in Palestine that ban “speakers that have expressed and continued to hold views or host/sponsor/promote events in support of Zionism, the apartheid state of Israel, and the occupation of Palestine” at their activities.

After law school Dean Erwin Chemerinsky learned of the move, he sent a letter to student groups, saying “It is troubling to broadly exclude a particular viewpoint from being expressed. Indeed, taken literally, this would mean that I could not be invited to speak because I support the existence of Israel, though I condemn many of its policies.”

But the dean missed the main point. Continued on page 3

THE MILITANT

End US economic war against Cuba! Now!

For 63 years the U.S. rulers have conducted a bipartisan economic, trade and financial war against the Cuban people, aiming to crush the socialist revolution they made. The ‘Militant’ supports actions to demand an immediate end to Washington’s economic war on Cuba.

Militant/Sara Lobman
August 28 march in Harlem, N.Y., demands end to U.S. rulers’ blockade against Cuba.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NEW READERS

☐ \$5 for 12 issues

RENEWAL

☐ \$10 for 12 weeks

☐ \$20 for 6 months

☐ \$35 for 1 year

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

PHONE E-MAIL

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT, 306 W. 37TH ST., 13TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10018. OR SUBSCRIBE ONLINE AT: WWW.THEMILITANT.COM

12 weeks of the *Militant* outside the U.S.: Australia, A\$10 • United Kingdom, £4 • Canada, Can\$7 • Caribbean and Latin America, US\$10 • Continental Europe, £8 • France, 8 euros • New Zealand and the Pacific Islands, A\$10 • All other areas, US\$16 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

The Militant

Vol. 86/No. 40

Closing news date: October 19, 2022

Editor: John Studer

Managing Editor: Terry Evans

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Seth Galinsky, Emma Johnson, Martín Koppel, Roy Landersen, Jacob Perasso, Brian Williams.

Published weekly except for one week in January, two weeks in August, one week in September.

Business Manager: Bob Bruce

The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Telephone: (212) 244-4899

Fax: (212) 244-4947

E-mail: themilitant@mac.com

Website: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States: For one year send \$35 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Africa, Asia, and the Middle East: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Canada: For one year send Canadian \$45 to the Militant, 7107 St. Denis #204, Montreal, Quebec H2S 2S5.

United Kingdom: Send £30 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London, 5 Norman Road (first floor), Seven Sisters, London, N15 4ND, England.

Republic of Ireland and Continental Europe: Send £85 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London at above address.

France: Send 100 euros for one year to Diffusion du Militant, BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15.

Australia: Send A\$70 for one year to P.O. Box 73 Campsie, NSW 2194 Australia.

New Zealand and the Pacific Islands: Send A\$70 for one year to above address.

Submissions to the *Militant* may be published in the newspaper in print and digital format. By submitting, authors represent that their submissions are original and consent to publication in this manner.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant*’s views. These are expressed in editorials.

Vote Socialist Workers Party!

Continued from front page ent unions, but had all closely followed the recent vote of Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way workers rejecting the contract offered to them. Some pulled to the side of the road to explain what they faced on the job with impossible work schedules that allowed no family life or needed rest and the increased danger on the job due to cuts in the number of workers. Two rail workers got subscriptions to the *Militant*, one with a copy of *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?* Another worker bought *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party*. Socialist Workers Party members from Chicago and Minneapolis traveled to Lincoln, Nebraska, Oct. 11 to campaign for Joe Swanson, a retired rail worker and SWP candidate for Congress. Campaign supporters spoke with rail workers at the BNSF rail maintenance base in Lincoln, discussing the contracts being voted on with the large railroad carriers. In the evening they met with Lance Anton, a freight conductor and member of SMART-TD, about the right of rail workers to strike. "Our class has to organize and get stronger to respond with solidarity when needed," Anton

said. "Workers need to see their worth and value of their labor. If need be, workers in unions will have to strike and fight for a living wage and safer working conditions and work schedules." Naomi Craine, a rail worker from Chicago and SWP candidate for Illinois governor, pointed to the example of the coal miners who struck in the middle of World War II despite the threats of the bosses and the U.S. government. The postal workers did the same thing in 1970. "The unions can take what we are strong enough to take," Craine said. Anton said workers need to know this history. In Minneapolis, campaigners participated in the annual Twin Cities Book Festival Oct. 15. A feature of the eight-week campaign to get 1,350 *Militant* subscriptions and to sell an equal number of books is the special offer on Pathfinder titles featured in the ad on page 6. All titles are 20% off to *Militant* subscribers. Thirteen people at the fair signed up for *Militant* subscriptions and 25 Pathfinder titles were purchased. Another key part of the fall campaign is the annual SWP Party-Building Fund, with its goal of \$140,000. All the party's work is based on contributions from workers and farmers.



Militant/Mary Ellen Marus Communist League table at Iran protest in Montreal Oct. 15 drew discussion over opposition to "morality police," ending sanctions on Iran and Washington's economic war on Cuba.

In Montreal, Communist League members joined a rally of 750 in support of protests in Iran Oct. 15. A number of Kurds, dressed in traditional clothing, joined the action, including Maryam Dayani. "All nationalities are united against the regime — Kurds, Baluch, Turkmens, Gilaki, Fars and others," she told campaign supporter Mary Ellen Marus. "This is beyond one country, this is

for humanity," Elham, who didn't want her last name used, told Katy LeRougetel, a League candidate for Quebec's National Assembly in Montreal and member of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union. Elham said she thought the Canadian government should be careful in accepting people into the country.

"I agree that the fight of the Iranian people for their rights is for all working people around the world," said LeRougetel, "but asking the Canadian government to use the anti-terrorism laws against immigration will weaken us. The government can use those laws against anyone protesting its policies. They are very sweeping."

"There were lots of movements in Iran in the last decades, every time it got big, it was cut off. They killed, used orders, repressed using all the force they had," Maral, who like Elham, didn't want to use her last name for fear of reprisals against family members in Iran, told campaign supporter Rosemary Ray. "This time around we feel it's different."

A table set up by the League attracted interest. Four participants signed up for *Militant* subscriptions, four bought books and others exchanged contact information with League members.

For more information on the SWP campaigns and the effort to win new readers, contact the SWP or Communist League branch nearest you listed on page 8.

Donate California gas tax rebate to the 'Militant'!

BY NORTON SANDLER LOS ANGELES — "I haven't received the \$350 in my bank account yet, but I am sending that amount to the *Militant* now in anticipation of getting it," Los Angeles area resident Pat Nixon said Oct. 18. "The *Militant* is essential for working people to learn about trade union struggles and the labor solidarity that is developing, and essential to understanding what is happening in the world today from a working-class point of view. The paper keeps getting better and better."

Supporters of the *Militant* are encouraging anyone who receives a California state gas rebate payment to send it to the *Militant*. The paper is facing major increases in printing costs and for mailing it to readers and distributors in the U.S. and internationally.

Using a California state budget surplus, Democratic Party Gov. Gavin Newsom and the Democratic-majority state legislature approved issuing \$9.5 billion in payouts to California residents, supposedly to "provide relief" from high gas prices. That's "9.5 billion reasons I think people should be appreciative that the state's recognizing the stress and strain that families are going through," Newsom boasted Oct. 7, the day the checks began going

out. Payments of \$350 are being sent to individuals who filed a 2020 state income tax return, \$750 to couples.

Gas in Los Angeles county and other parts of California are more than \$2 above the national average. Newsom's token payments are a drop in the bucket compared to what California workers and their families have to shell out at the pump. Especially hard hit are truckers who are paying exorbitant diesel fuel prices.

"It's a ploy by the government, \$350 offsets nothing," *Militant* supporter Jan Gangel said.

Contribute your rebate to the *Militant*! This is the best way to get out the truth about today's capitalist crisis and its skyrocketing inflation. Send your checks to the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018, or contribute online at themilitant.com.

Campaign to expand reach of 'Militant,' books, SWP fund
Sept. 17 - November 15 (week four)

| Country | Sub quota | Subs sold | Books quota | Books sold | Fund quota | Fund received |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|------------|------------|---------------|
| UNITED STATES | | | | | | |
| Atlanta | 75 | 36 | 75 | 29 | \$9,600 | \$1,153 |
| Chicago | 110 | 54 | 110 | 52 | \$14,000 | \$3,015 |
| Cincinnati | 70 | 25 | 70 | 19 | \$6,000 | \$1,100 |
| Dallas-FortWorth | 65 | 36 | 65 | 34 | \$5,000 | \$1,845 |
| Lincoln | 15 | 9 | 15 | 7 | \$500 | \$300 |
| Los Angeles | 90 | 42 | 90 | 68 | \$15,250 | \$2,704 |
| Miami | 45 | 12 | 45 | 12 | \$5,750 | \$1,543 |
| Minneapolis | 70 | 39 | 70 | 56 | \$5,500 | \$729 |
| N.New Jersey | 70 | 41 | 70 | 48 | \$7,500 | \$2,332 |
| New York | 115 | 46 | 115 | 47 | \$21,000 | \$5,592 |
| Oakland | 90 | 55 | 90 | 55 | \$15,500 | \$8,959 |
| Philadelphia | 50 | 20 | 50 | 25 | \$6,000 | \$600 |
| Pittsburgh | 65 | 33 | 65 | 17 | \$6,000 | \$1,293 |
| Seattle | 75 | 38 | 75 | 23 | \$14,500 | \$4,140 |
| Washington | 50 | 21 | 50 | 36 | \$4,600 | \$1,115 |
| Other | | 11 | | 89 | | \$750 |
| Total U.S. | 1055 | 518 | 1055 | 617 | \$136,700 | \$37,170 |
| Prisoners | 50 | 51 | | | | |
| UNITED KINGDOM | | | | | | |
| London | 40 | 22 | 40 | 34 | | |
| Manchester | 40 | 19 | 40 | 10 | | |
| Total U.K. | 80 | 41 | 80 | 44 | | |
| Canada | 80 | 43 | 80 | 51 | | |
| Australia | 30 | 17 | 30 | 22 | | |
| Total | 1,295 | 670 | 1,245 | 734 | \$136,700 | \$37,170 |
| SHOULD BE | 1,350 | 675 | 1,350 | 675 | \$140,000 | \$70,000 |

Ban on speakers who defend Israel's right to exist

Continued from page 2 Yes, it's a ban on free speech, but, more importantly, it's a ban targeting Jews speaking on anything, since over 80% of Jews support the right of Israel to exist.

The ban sparked an outcry from opponents of antisemitism. The *Jewish Journal* published an article titled "Berkeley Develops Jewish-Free Zones," by Kenneth Marcus, chairman of the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law, a Jewish civil rights group.

'Zionist' = Jew

"Anti-Zionism is flatly antisemitic," Marcus wrote. "Using 'Zionist' as a euphemism for Jew is nothing more than a

confidence trick."

Chemerinsky backtracked, claiming the outcry by dozens of Jewish organizations and others is a "misguided furor" based on "misleading" news reports. He says it's a "narrative" aimed at falsely portraying universities and especially Berkeley as anti-Semitic. He pointed to recent programs with Jewish and Israeli speakers on campus.

But the point is that Jew-hatred under the guise of "woke" cancel culture has been rearing its ugly head across the country, while university officials claim there's nothing to worry about.

For example, in August two Jewish students at the State University of New York at New Paltz were booted from a support group for sexual assault victims after being told, "Zionists are not welcome."

Dean Chemerinsky responded with greater vehemence to Marcus than he did to the new bylaws. He claimed that none of the groups have actually carried out the policy they adopted, and

that if they did they would be subject to "sanctions." And anyway, he asserted, once he voiced his opposition "the issue quickly faded at the Law School."

Except that this isn't true. It's a cover-up. Law Students for Justice in Palestine fired off a letter responding to Chemerinsky. This time eight more student groups added their names to the call to ban supporters of Israel's right to exist from speaking at the law school, bringing the total to 17.

Their reply to the dean states, "Free speech and the exchange of ideas cannot be romanticized when the byproduct of such rhetoric causes harm to marginalized communities." To make it clear they were moving ahead with their censorship, the group organized a "Palestine 101 Training" session Sept. 21 aimed at promoting implementation of the bylaws.

The Brandeis Center's Marcus wrote again Oct. 9, explaining the Berkeley groups are not "boycotting only Israel. They are boycotting American Jews."

UK rulers, in political crisis, aim attacks at working class

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — Just 40 days after taking office, Prime Minister Elizabeth Truss faces calls to quit from fellow Conservative Party members, following financial turmoil triggered by her government's first budget. This heralds further assaults on jobs, wages and pensions, exacerbating the crisis inflicted on working people over many years.

Truss, the fourth Conservative prime minister in six years, had promised to break with the program of her predecessor, Boris Johnson, and implement tax cuts she said would pave the way for economic growth. Her budget presented tax cuts for corporations and individual capitalists, as well as taxes that workers pay, leaving a 70 billion pound (\$78.6 billion) hole in the government's budget. This fueled fears within capitalist circles here and around the world over stoking inflation and the viability of government debt repayments.

Capitalist speculators greeted the budget with a run on the pound and a sell-off of U.K. government bonds, known here as "gilts." Interest rates shot up as a result. Pension funds faced meltdown. The Bank of England was forced to buy billions of pounds of gilts to prop up the market.

The interest rates rise means that millions of workers and many among the middle class face hikes in mortgage payments. Rising payments for credit card debt and bank overdrafts will follow. Small-business owners face hikes in debt payments, threatening some with bankruptcy.

Workers expressed very different concerns to those of the wealthy propertied owners. Millions are weighing their job security. Already half a million have been pushed out of the labor force since the pandemic.

"The crisis is not new," Magdalena Maj, a nurse from the Bethnal Green neighborhood here, told the *Militant* Oct. 4. "Remember the financial crisis in 2008. Just like then, it was all about the banks, financial institutions, credit. But what has happened since? It's working people who have suffered."

Real wages have declined at the sharpest rate on record and employers have imposed brutal shift patterns and other attacks on working conditions. The National Health Service is facing "complete collapse," according to the doctors' GP Online, with waiting lists for elective surgery topping 7 million.

With declining confidence in her government and fearing moves to oust her by rival Conservatives, Truss reversed course.

She fired Chancellor of the Exchequer Kwasi Kwarteng Oct. 14, replacing him

with Jeremy Hunt, who ripped up the budget and announced tax raises and cuts to public spending.

"Whatever the government does, it will not be good for working people," Ariful Chowdry, a biomedical student in London, told the *Militant*. "They save the banks, but those most in need go to the wall." His mother, Shamima Ahmed, pointed to something else that is changing. "What's good is that many workers are going on strike," she said.

Hundreds of thousands of workers — among them rail workers, bus drivers, refuse collectors — have taken strike action to protect wages and job conditions. "Strikers need our support," Ahmed said.

Bosses at Royal Mail, where 115,000 postal workers, members of the Communication Workers Union, are engaged in a campaign of work stoppages, have announced 10,000 job cuts and plans to scrap the current redundancy scheme. The industrial action is against a paltry 2% wage raise, cuts to sick pay, opposition to mandatory Sunday work and other changes to work conditions.

Weakness of UK capitalist rulers

Truss complained that the bond and currency speculators' response to her now-scrapped budget was "unfair" because the U.K.'s debt-to-gross-domestic-product ratio was low compared to many rival capitalist powers. Business Secretary Jacob Rees-Mogg blamed the Bank of England, saying it should have raised interest rates earlier and more aggressively. The pound had declined 17% against the dollar before Kwarteng's budget.

But their complaints mask the special vulnerability of the U.K. rulers' capitalist economy. In a world facing stagflation, the U.K. is the most "stagflated" among the G-7 nations, with retail price inflation at over 12%, and per capita economic growth averaging under 1% annually since 2000.

Investment in capacity-expanding plant and equipment trails that of rivals. And capitalist profit rates have been squeezed in the U.K. for decades. Today, trading in British pounds accounts for just 5% of world trade.

The biggest expenditure in the now-scrapped budget was a plan to cap energy prices. Truss and Kwarteng had feared workers' reaction to a previously planned huge price hike. For this worker-correspondent, this would have meant a more than threefold increase in gas and electric bills to nearly six thousand pounds annually.

A government cap on energy prices is backed by all capitalist parties — Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat,

Turkish workers decry deadly gov't coal mine blast



Reuters/Kemal Asian

Saban Yildirim, one of 41 miners killed in an Oct. 14 coal mine disaster in Amasra, Turkey, had told his wife that "the mine had been smelling of gas inside for 10 days," his father Kemal Yildirim told the press. But the state-owned mine bosses did nothing.

The explosion took place underground about 1.5 miles from the entrance. Many of the miners were in their early 20s and had only been working at the Turkish Hard Coal Enterprises' mine for a few years.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan attended several of the funerals. Above, funeral in Ahatlar Oct. 16. The sister of one of the miners in the village of Makaraci told Erdogan because of the gas leak her brother said, "They will blow us up soon." They died because of "negligence," she told him. "Sorry for your loss," he replied. "May Allah give you patience."

Erdogan made even clearer his view when he told reporters that same day that he believes "in the plan of destiny," adding that accidents "will always happen." A similar mine disaster took place near Soma in 2014, where 301 miners died. It was met with the same kind of government disdain.

Emin Koramaz, a leader of the Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects, had a different view. "If you send miners hundreds of meters underground without taking the necessary precautions, without inspection and without creating safe conditions, you cannot call it an accident," he said in a statement.

— SETH GALINSKY

and the Scottish National Party. Chancellor Hunt now says it will last only until April 2023.

According to polls, Conservatives, the go-to party of the ruling class for a century, face an electoral wipe out. In September Labour Party leader Keir Starmer said tax cuts for the rich were "hugely divisive" in response to Kwarteng's budget.

Starmer presents Labour as the party of capitalist economic and political stability, saying Truss has "driven the economy into a wall" and is "trashing our institutions." John Allan, boss of the U.K.'s largest retailer, Tesco, says a re-

cession is likely and Labour is the only party with a plan to grow the economy.

None of the capitalist political options on offer — a weakened Truss, a new Conservative prime minister, a Labour Party government — will do anything to protect workers from the rulers' drive to put the crisis of their system on our backs. Nor will they turn around the fortunes of British capitalism. Continued attacks on working-class living standards and political instability are guaranteed, posing the need for workers to organize independently of the bosses, build and strengthen our unions, and forge our own party.

Alabama longshore workers vote to strike over concessions contract

BY SUSAN LAMONT

ATLANTA — International Longshoremen's Association Local 1410 sent out a press release announcing plans to take strike action Oct. 20 against CSA Equipment Company, which operates at the Port of Mobile, Alabama, on the Gulf of Mexico.

"There is overwhelming support among our members for strike action," ILA Local 1410 President Mark Bass told the *Militant* by phone Oct. 17. "We know that what we do isn't just about us. It affects every other worker too." Local 1410 is the largest ILA local at the port.

Negotiations between CSA and Local 1410 for a new contract began in early 2018. Basic issues concerning work agreements and retroactive benefits remain outstanding and workers voted three times to reject company proposals. After the latest vote in September, union members decided they had no choice but to strike, the local's press release said. "The men and women of our local have given all they can give," said Bass.

ILA Local 1410 has a long history

of extending solidarity to other unions, including support for the United Mine Workers of America members who have been on strike at Warrior Met Coal in Brookwood, Alabama, since April 2021. Bass was part of an ILA delegation that brought solidarity to striking port workers in Liverpool and Felixstowe in the U.K. in September.

— CALENDAR — UNITED KINGDOM

On the 60th Anniversary: The 1962 'Missile' Crisis as Seen From Cuba.

London: Speakers: Bárbara Montalvo, Cuban ambassador to U.K.; Miriam Palacios, Cubans in the U.K.; and Jonathan Silberman, Pathfinder Books. Sun., Oct. 30, 2:30 p.m. *Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1R 4RL. Tel: 020-3015 7071.*

Manchester: Speakers: Bárbara Montalvo, Cuban ambassador to U.K.; Professor Antoni Kapcia; and Jonathan Silberman, Pathfinder Books. Fri., Oct. 28, 7 p.m. *Cross Street Chapel, 29 Cross St., M2 1NL. Tel: 07899 797626; Email for both events: admin@pathfinderbooks.co.uk.*

End the US Economic War Against Cuba! Saturday, Oct. 29, Times Square, 12 p.m.

- Take Cuba off Washington's 'State Sponsors of Terrorism' list
- End all U.S. anti-Cuba economic and travel sanctions

For more information: unvote4cuba@gmail.com; www.unvote4cuba.org

Protest FBI Harassment of Cuba Solidarity Brigade in Puerto Rico

Panelists: Milagros Rivera, president Cuba Solidarity Committee of Puerto Rico. Also Rev. Dorlimar Lebrón, People's Church; Gail Walker, IFCO/Pastors for Peace; Martín Koppel, Socialist Workers Party; Representative, Frente Independentista Boricua; Representative, African People's Socialist Party

Friday Oct. 28 — 7 p.m. New York City

First Spanish United Methodist Church (People's Church) 163 E. 111st St., East Harlem
For more information: frenteindependentistaboricua@gmail.com

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

U.S. Steel workers rally in fight for new national contract

MERRILLVILLE, Ind. — More than 200 United Steelworkers members from U.S. Steel's Gary Works braved rain and stiff winds to send a message to the corporation's CEO, David Burritt, who was speaking here Oct. 11 to the local chapter of the Association for Iron and Steel Technology. The contract for some 13,000 union members at 13 company steel mills across the country expired Sept. 1.

"We don't want to take concessions," Willie Julkes told the *Militant*. A 27-year veteran at Gary Works, Julkes is a maintenance mechanic. The unionists are working under a day-by-day contract extension. "People are frustrated that we don't have a contract."

Trucks and cars passing by the busy highway honked their support as Julkes and others held up signs saying, "Solidarity." Workers chanted, rang cow bells and waved signs and flags to make sure the company boss got the message: "No contract. No peace!"

Several hundred union members had marched in Virginia, Minnesota, Oct. 8 when Burritt visited the area. Some 1,550 USW members work at U.S. Steel's two iron ore mines in the northern Minnesota Mesabi Iron Range.

"We are nowhere close on wages, health care, pensions, any type of benefits, vacations, personal time off, family paid time off, parental leave," USW representative John Arbogast told marchers.

— David Rosenfeld

San Francisco airport strikers win victory, gain wage raise

SAN FRANCISCO — After three days on strike, over 1,000 cooks, servers, dishwashers, baristas, lounge attendants and cashiers at San Francisco's International Airport won a new contract Sept. 28. They got a \$5 an hour wage increase over two years, \$3 now and two more by September 2024.

The workers, members of UNITE HERE Local 2, also won their demand to keep their family health plan with no premiums and less than \$30 co-

pays for most doctor visits.

Given the high cost of housing here, many travel long distances to work. Jonathan Lanaria lives in Concord, about an hour away, and told the *Militant* he pays \$17 a day to take the train. He said many workers hold down two jobs, and some sleep in cars to make it to work.

They were hit with severe layoffs and shortened hours during the pandemic. Then, when the airport opened up for more business, prices for gas and other necessities skyrocketed. After nine months of no progress in negotiations, over 99% voted to strike. The walkout forced most of the 80 plus food and beverage outlets at the airport to close.

The contract with the airport's consortium of restaurants was voted up by 99.5%. It includes a defined-benefit pension, a policy that protects workers' jobs when outlets change hands, as well as a one-time \$1,500 bonus.

— Betsey Stone

Temple University graduate assistants rally for new contract

PHILADELPHIA — Unionized graduate assistants at Temple University protested outside the school's board of trustees meeting taking place at Charles Library here Oct. 11 demanding a new contract.

The demonstration, organized by Temple University Graduate Student Assistants, American Federation of Teachers Local 6290, represents more than 700 teaching and research assistants at the school. They teach core classes and carry out research for regular professors.

"We do a lot of work and work long hours," Manasa Gopakumar, a former local president and current union negotiating committee member, told the *Militant*. "TAs teach two classes a week, with up to 30 students per class," he said. "That can take 60 hours a week or more." At the same time, they're also laboring to complete work on their degrees.

Temple's student body is growing and the college is making money — \$239 million profit in 2021. They raised



Militant/Betsey Stone

UNITE HERE Local 2 members picket San Francisco airport Sept. 26, during three-day strike. Workers won wage raise, prevented bosses from increasing family health care costs.

tuition by 3.9% for this year, while slashing the school's budget for staff and other expenses by 3.6%.

The teaching assistants' contract ran out in February and the university administration has "stalled, stonewalled and delayed at every opportunity" since, the union said in a flyer handed out at the rally.

They're demanding wage increases, health care coverage, parental leave time and child care. Many have families to support. The university's wage offer is a measly 2% increase, while inflation is running over four times that amount.

— Osborne Hart

Solidarity concert to save jobs at Greek smelter and mines

LARYMNA, Greece — A solidarity concert attended by over 250 mine and smelter workers, their families and area unionists and other supporters took place here Oct. 9, about a two-hour drive north of Athens.

Larco, the largest nickel producer in the EU and the state-owned company that operated the smelter here, has been in receivership for three years. The Greek government has been trying to sell it, while workers and their unions here and in four other parts of the country have been fighting for mining and

smelting operations to continue.

"The more than 1,200 workers and contract laborers at Larco were fired July 29. That same day, each individual had to sign temporary contracts to enable them to work until the end of December," Panagiotis Politis, president of the Union of Workers at the Larymna smelter, told the *Militant*. "Many have been put to work shutting down the huge furnaces and securing installations."

"The government has offered us a 'bridge' scheme, which is a bridge to unemployment. But we don't want stipends — we demand the right to work," he said. "We have managed to remain in the plant up to now, and we will not go away. We demand that everyone be rehired by any new owners, keeping our union representation."

"Three hundred families were supposed to abandon their homes, which belong to the company, when we were all fired in July," said Kostas Samaras. "They are still there, too. But of course this bears down heavily on us, as you not only lose your job but your very home."

Speaking to the crowd before the start of the concert, Politis thanked the Panhellenic Union of Musicians, which provided the day's entertainment, as well as the labor centers of Lamia and other towns, local mayors who came, and parliamentary delegations from the Communist Party and Syriza who were there.

The event was held on a football field a stone's throw from the idle plant. Working people and union locals from the nearby communities of Martino, Chalkida, Lamia, Thiva and elsewhere came bringing donations.

"Closing down the plant and the adjacent mine would also shut down our communities here," Politis said. "With their solidarity, as well as that of dozens of unions around the country, and together with the strikers at Malamatina [winery in Thessaloniki] and others, we will keep fighting. We can only win together!"

Messages of support can be sent to openlarco@gmail.com.

— Natasha Terlexi and Georges Mehrabian

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



November 3, 1997

SANTA CLARA, Cuba — "We come not to bid farewell to Che and his heroic comrades, but to welcome them," Cuban president Fidel Castro told an overflow crowd in the Ernesto Che Guevara Plaza Oct. 17. "I see Che and his men as reinforcements, as a detachment of invincible fighters, who this time include not only Cubans but Latin Americans coming to fight alongside us and write new pages of history and glory. Che was a genuine communist — and today he remains an example, a model of a revolutionary and a communist."

Tens of thousands packed the square to honor the revolutionary leader and his fellow communist fighters who fell in battle in Bolivia 30 years ago. The rally and military ceremony were the culmination of activities in which the remains of Guevara and six of his combatants, recently returned from Bolivia, were interred here.



November 3, 1972

The *Militant* urges its readers to vote for Linda Jenness and Andrew Pulley, the presidential ticket of the Socialist Workers Party. Jenness and Pulley are the only presidential candidates who have campaigned for immediate and unconditional U.S. withdrawal from all of Indochina and for the right of the Indochinese people to self-determination.

Many other deep problems plague American society. All the major questions facing working people — the war, unemployment, racist oppression, and inflation — are political questions. Jenness and Pulley call for the formation of a labor party, based on the trade unions, so that working people will be able to fight for their own political interests.

To those who say voting for the Socialist Workers candidates is "throwing your vote away," we say voting for the SWP is the only way to make your vote count.



November 3, 1947

Sitting in Washington as prosecutor, judge and jury is the Thomas-Rankin Un-American Committee "investigating" the movies. In the name of "Americanism" they violate the basic civil liberty of freedom of thought, guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution.

The investigation is one of the chief red-baiting instruments of the Wall Street-State Department combine. The victims of the red-hunt are deprived of their civil rights. A monstrous campaign of red-baiting and violation of civil liberties has been going on for a year now.

Supreme Court decisions limiting the Bill of Rights, the Taft-Hartley Act, purges of federal employees, deportation proceedings, and now we see it entering the phase of "thought control." It is aimed against free speech and thought, just as red-baiting in the unions is really aimed at the trade unions themselves.

**Subscribe, contribute
to the 'Militant'
online at
themilitant.com**

‘Cuban women have always been on the front lines of the struggle’

Marianas in Combat: Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women’s Platoon in Cuba’s Revolutionary War, 1956-58 by Teté Puebla is one of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month for October. Puebla became second in command of the first all-female platoon in Cuba’s Rebel Army, which was led by Fidel Castro. She rose to become a brigadier general, the highest-ranking woman in Cuba’s Revolutionary Armed Forces. Puebla’s life has been interwoven with the fight to transform the social and economic status of women as part of Cuba’s socialist revolution. Copyright © 2003 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY TETÉ PUEBLA

The first great effort was the literacy drive, which had its roots in the Rebel Army. There was a department for this in the armed forces.

In 1958 I helped Celia [Sánchez] organize elementary schools in the Sierra Maestra, since there were none there, and of course many children were illiterate. The big majority of peasant women were illiterate, and many rebel fighters too.

Cuba was the first in the world to eradicate illiteracy. Women were part of that struggle, young women especially. There was a massive incorporation of youth and children into the lit-



Granma/Liborio Noval

“March of the Pencils” in Havana Dec. 22, 1961, celebrates success of literacy campaign. About 250,000 volunteers, a majority young women, taught 700,000 adults to read and write.

eracy effort, with boys and girls aged ten, eleven, and twelve teaching others, including adults, how to read and write. Women made up over half of the literacy volunteers. And, of course, illiteracy was greater among women than men. ...

After the revolution, this changed. Women began to organize massively working to change the conditions of their lives and to free themselves.

On August 23, 1960, several organizations came together to form the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC). Vilma Espín was president. It joined together in a single organization all the women’s organizations that existed at the time.

From the beginning, the Federation worked to incorporate women into the struggle through bringing them into the work force. Because when a woman begins to work outside her home, she organizes her life and she develops. This happened in all stages of the revolution. And among women of all ages and in all occupations.

Before the triumph, many women used to come in from the countryside to work as servants in the homes of the rich. So the federation opened up schools for them. We established the Ana Betancourt schools here in Havana, named after a combatant from the independence war of 1868. Some of the mansions in Miramar, like those in which the women used to work, were turned into schools and dormitories for them.

In the Ana Betancourt schools the

women learned to read and write; in addition, they were taught to sew and embroider. When their studies were over, and they graduated in cutting and sewing, Fidel ordered that each one be given a sewing machine to take home. The commitment was they would use it to teach someone else. You’d see these machines in peasants’ homes in the mountains and on the plains.

I was involved in helping to recruit the first campesinas for the Ana Betancourt School.

To get those peasant women to come, to get the men to agree wasn’t easy. A lot of machismo existed. Some men would say, “Not my daughter” or “Not my wife.” And we had to work hard to bring them into the revolutionary process, to convince the men why we had to teach sewing, that it would be a help to their families.

During the final years of the dictatorship there were also many prostitutes. They were brought into the revolution, too. They were given housing because many were from outside Havana and had no homes here. We built schools for them and found them jobs in workplaces.

An especially big effort was made toward women who had worked as prostitutes in Havana. It was true elsewhere too, but the largest concentration had been in Havana. Before the revolution, it was even considered a privilege for these women to prostitute themselves in

Havana, because of the greater possibilities for getting out of the country.

These women had taken the road of prostitution because they couldn’t find work under capitalism. But the revolution changed that. The Federation of Cuban Women played a role in this, a very important one. ...

In the Sierra Maestra the work of incorporating women into schools and jobs was easier. Because the peasants had seen us with them there from the beginning. It was harder in other places; you have to keep in mind the low cultural level of the peasants before the revolution, the isolation and lack of access to education.

These prejudices were still strong a full decade after the revolution’s victory.

In March 1969, on the order of the commander in chief, I was named director of the Guaicanamar Cattle Plan in Jaruco, in Havana province. He said he was putting me in charge to demonstrate that women could lead as well as men, to show that women could lead an agricultural project, that women could head up any front and carry out any task of the revolution. ...

Women in Cuba have always been on the front line of the struggle. At Moncada we had Yeyé [Haydée Santamaría] and Melba [Hernández]. With the *Granma* and November 30, we had Celia, Vilma, and many other compañeras. There were many women comrades who were tortured and murdered.

From the beginning there were women in the Revolutionary Armed Forces. First they were simple soldiers, later sergeants. Those of us in the Mariana Grajales Platoon were the first officers. The ones who ended the war with officers’ ranks stayed in the armed forces.

Today there’s a women’s regiment in the Border Guard Battalion at the Guantánamo U.S. naval base in Caimanera, commanded by Lt. Col. Victoria Arrauz Caraballo, who was named by the minister of the armed forces to be second in command of the Border Guard Battalion that guards that territory. There are women in all the military units. They’re captains, majors, colonels. Women have also carried out internationalist missions. They went to Angola, to Ethiopia and elsewhere. By the time of the Angola mission, we had formed the Women’s Antiaircraft Artillery Defense Regiments.

October
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Pathfinder Readers Club Specials

30% DISCOUNT

MARIANAS IN COMBAT
Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women’s Platoon in Cuba’s revolutionary war
Marianas in Combat
Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women’s Platoon in Cuba’s Revolutionary War 1956-58
TETÉ PUEBLA
How the fight to transform the social and economic status of women has been inseparably part of Cuba’s socialist revolution.
\$10. **Special price \$7**

The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State
FREDERICK ENGELS
\$15. **Special price \$10.50**

COINTELPRO: The FBI’s Secret War on Political Freedom
NELSON BLACKSTOCK
\$15. **Special price \$10.50**

In Defense of Marxism
LEON TROTSKY
\$17. **Special price \$12**

50 Años de Operaciones Encubiertas en EE.UU.
(50 Years of Covert Operations in the US)
FARRELL DOBBS, LARRY SEIGLE, STEVE CLARK
\$10. **Special price \$7**

Rosa Luxemburg Speaks
\$25. **Special price \$17.50**

Join the Pathfinder Readers Club for \$10 and receive discounts all year long

ORDER ONLINE AT
PATHFINDERPRESS.COM
OFFER GOOD UNTIL October 31

IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

Where to find distributors of the *Militant*, *New International*, and a full display of Pathfinder books.

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: **Oakland:** 675 Hegenberger Road, Suite 250. Zip: 94621. Tel: (510) 686-1351. Email: swpoak@sbcglobal.net **Los Angeles:** 2826 S. Vermont. Suite 1. Zip: 90007. Tel: (323) 643-4968. Email: swpla@att.net

FLORIDA: **Miami:** 5711 NW 7th Ave. Unit B. Zip: 33142. Tel: (305) 929-8966. Email: swpmiami@icloud.com

GEORGIA: **Atlanta:** 777 Cleveland Ave. SW Suite 103. Zip: 30315. Tel: (678) 528-7828. Email: swpatlanta@fastmail.com

ILLINOIS: **Chicago:** 1858 W. Cermak Road, 2nd floor. Zip: 60608. Tel: (312) 792-6160. Email: SWPChicago@fastmail.fm

MINNESOTA: **Minneapolis:** 2401 1/2 Central Ave. NE, Unit B. Zip: 55418. Tel: (612) 271-1930. Email: swpminneapolis@gmail.com

NEBRASKA: **Lincoln:** P.O. Box 6811.

Zip: 68506. Tel: (402) 217-4906. Email: swplincoln@gmail.com

NEW JERSEY: 3600 Bergenline, Suite 205B, Union City. Zip: 07087. Tel: (551) 240-1512. swpnewjersey@gmail.com

NEW YORK: **New York:** 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor. Zip: 10018. Tel: (646) 434-8117. Email: newyorkswp@gmail.com

OHIO: **Cincinnati:** 2300 Montana Ave., Suite 230. Tel: Zip: 45211. (513) 837-1038. Email: swpcincinnati@gmail.com

PENNSYLVANIA: **Philadelphia:** 2824 Cottman Ave., Suite 16. Zip: 19149. Tel: (215) 708-1270. Email: philaswp@verizon.net **Pittsburgh:** 5907 Penn Ave., Suite 313. Zip: 15206. Tel: (412) 610-2402. Email: swppittsburgh@gmail.com

TEXAS: **Dallas-Fort Worth:** 6815 Manhattan Blvd., Suite 108 Fort Worth. Zip: 76120. Tel: (817) 899-6720. Email: dfswp@gmail.com

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 7603 Georgia Ave. NW, Suite 300. Zip: 20012. Tel: (202) 536-5080. Email: swp.washingtondc@verizon.net

WASHINGTON: **Seattle:** 650 S. Orcas St., #120 Zip: 98108. Tel: (206) 323-1755. Email: swpseattle@gmail.com

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: Suite 2, First floor, 275 George St., Liverpool. Postal Address: P.O. Box 73 Campsie, NSW 2194. Tel: (61) 435-995-604. Email: cl_australia@optusnet.com.au

CANADA

QUEBEC: **Montreal:** 7107 St. Denis #204 H2S 2S5. Tel: (514) 272-5840. Email: clcmontreal@fastmail.com

FRANCE

Paris: BP 10130, 75723 Paris Cedex 15. Email: militant.paris@gmail.com

UNITED KINGDOM

ENGLAND: **London:** 5 Norman Road (first floor). Seven Sisters. Post code: N15 4ND. Tel: 020-3538 8900. Email: cllondon@fastmail.fm **Manchester:** 329, Royal Exchange Buildings, 3 Old Bank St. Post code: M2 7PE. Tel: (0161) 312-8119. Email: clmanchr@gmail.com

Solidarity with miners! No worker has to die!

Statement issued Oct. 19 by Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Texas. A former coal miner, Kennedy was part of a Militant reporting team to Soma, Turkey, in 2014.

The methane gas explosion in the state-owned Turkish Hard Coal Enterprises’ coal mine in the northern Black Sea coast town of Amasra, Turkey, underscores the fight of workers around the world to organize, unionize and use union power to fight together for workers control of safety and organization of production on the job. Our unions need the power to shut down production whenever danger to workers exists.

The Oct. 14 blast killed 41 out of the 110 miners working. Another 11 were injured; five with burns covering 65% or more of their bodies. It was the worst mine disaster in Turkey since 2014, when 301 miners were killed in a mine fire at the Eynez Coal Mine in Soma. I met miners there and helped get out the truth about how the bosses and government were responsible for their deaths.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan told reporters in Amasra, “We are people who believe in the plan of destiny. Such accidents will always happen.” He told miners’ families the same thing in Soma in 2014. “Accidents” are normal, he said, and “death is the destiny of coal miners.” But this isn’t

destiny. No miner has to die!

The Amasra miners reported smelling gas inside the mine for days. One woman told Erdogan her brother told her, “They will blow us up here.” He described gas leaking weeks before the explosion. He was one of those who perished.

Local union leaders said there was widespread neglect at the mine and the workforce had been cut by 50% since 2001. Since the 2014 Soma disaster, 673 more miners have been killed, 53 so far in 2022. But Turkey is no different than any other capitalist country, where bosses push for maximum production and profits with the full backing of their governments.

The world capitalist system is in a deepening, long-term crisis of production and trade, with increasing prospects that workers and farmers will confront an extended period of stagflation.

Workers face dangerous conditions in industries worldwide. This can and must be changed! The working class has the numbers and power to do so!

No matter where we live, by organizing and fighting we gain experience, class consciousness and confidence. In addition to fighting for workers control of production, we need to form our own political party, based on our unions, to fight to replace the rule of the bosses with a workers and farmers government.

No worker has to die on the job!

As vote looms, Democrats attack constitutional rights

Continued from front page

Trump, dating back to his 2016 campaign, and current Jan. 6 hearings are grave attacks on crucially needed constitutional freedoms. Regardless of who the target is, this sets a dangerous precedent that will be turned into a weapon against working people.

Freedoms codified in the Constitution — free speech and assembly and more — are crucial whenever working people are involved in strike battles, fights for women’s rights and against cop brutality, and protests against the U.S. rulers’ brutal embargo of Cuba.

The working class and its vanguard have long faced attacks on these rights from the capitalist rulers and the FBI, their central political police outfit. In the late 1930s, President Franklin Roosevelt sent the FBI after the militant Teamsters union in the Upper Midwest and the Socialist Workers Party to try and crush opposition in the labor movement to Washington’s entry into the Second World War.

After the war, it was the McCarthyite witch hunt targeting labor militants, the Communist Party and SWP that dealt blows to political rights.

In the 1960s, Democratic and Republican governments alike turned the FBI loose against leaders of the fight against Jim Crow segregation, opponents of their brutal war in Vietnam and others. The SWP led in exposing Cointelpro operations through its successful lawsuit and political campaign against the political police. This dealt blows to the FBI, exposing its long record of spying, burglaries, wiretaps and disruption.

Today the central challenge to constitutional freedoms is the assault on Trump by the Biden White House, along with his fellow Democrats and a layer of Never-Trump Republicans. The FBI is at the center of their efforts.

House witch hunt, sedition laws

Underlining the show-trial character of the Jan. 6 House select committee, this final round of hearings relies heavily on professionally produced and highly edited videos that eliminate any danger of cross examination or opposing testimony.

Despite hundreds of hours of testimony and millions of documents, the House committee has yet to come up with anything to bring charges against Trump.

Committee members held closed-door interviews with dozens of former Trump officials throughout the summer, hoping to get someone to finger him for something, without any real success.

Trump wrote to Committee Chair Bernard Thompson in response to the Oct. 13 subpoena, saying the hearings were orchestrated by the same people who manufactured the Trump/Russia collusion hoax and

set the FBI spying on his 2016 campaign. He refused to say whether he would appear, but did say the committee had “no legitimacy.”

Now committee member Rep. Zoe Lofgren is trying to smear Trump with guilt by association. The new hearings will show “the mob” on Jan. 6 “was led by some extremist groups, they plotted in advance what they were going to do and those individuals were known to people in the Trump orbit.”

More than a dozen people have been charged with seditious conspiracy stemming from the action at the Capitol. The trial of Oath Keepers militia leader Stewart Rhodes is underway. Prosecutors will call 40 witnesses over three-and-a-half weeks, ensuring the trial lasts through the elections, aiding the Democrats.

Sedition and conspiracy laws make advocating ideas — free speech — a crime. They are a serious danger to the entire labor movement and anyone who speaks out against government policy. Such charges were used to try to silence abolitionists before the Civil War and to bring charges against leaders of the Teamsters and the Socialist Workers Party in 1941.

FBI offers \$1 million to get Trump

The extent of the FBI’s campaign to prevent Trump’s election in 2016 was highlighted during the just completed trial of ex-spy and FBI informant Igor Danchenko. He was acquitted Oct. 18 of charges of lying to the FBI, but the trial was revealing.

At the trial FBI “analyst” Brian Auten admitted the FBI offered British spy Christopher Steele \$1 million just before the 2016 election if he could provide any proof to confirm his dossier’s lurid claims that Trump was colluding with Moscow. Danchenko had fed Steele much of the unsubstantiated allegations Steele then regurgitated. Steele had nothing for them.

So the FBI knew Steele’s dossier was a Democratic Party-funded tissue of lies, but used it anyway to get a warrant to spy on Trump campaigner Carter Page. And the FBI put Danchenko on its payroll for nearly four years to try to keep him quiet. FBI boss James Comey was at the heart of these 2016 operations.

Then the Democrats chose ex-FBI boss Robert Mueller to run a 22-month-long probe into the same discredited claim that Trump was a Russian agent, based on the same smears provided by Steele.

Covert operations, lying, disruption and frame-ups are part and parcel of FBI operations. Its role as the capitalist rulers’ political police force is to spearhead assaults on working people and on freedoms we need.

The Democrats are trying to refurbish the image of the FBI snoops, in preparation for deepening class struggle battles to come.

Inflation deepens crisis

Continued from front page

more. Grocery prices leapt 13% from a year ago, eggs by 30.5%, chicken by 17.2%, and milk by 15.2%.

Health insurance costs rose 28.2% for the year. While gas prices have moderated over the past three months, they’re still 18% higher than a year ago.

Rents surged at the fastest pace in over three decades. Nationwide, rents are now 20% higher than they were in early 2020. Average home mortgage rates Oct. 13 rose to 6.92%, a 20-year high.

And government “specialists,” the *Wall Street Journal* reported Oct. 16, say the cost of heating a home with natural gas this winter will jump 28%.

This reality puts getting a home and starting a family out of reach for many young workers.

With millions of working people already living paycheck to paycheck, these price hikes tighten the squeeze. Some workers have succeeded in winning wage increases by striking — from union teachers in Minneapolis to grocery workers in Colorado. But most workers are losing ground. Real wages declined in September by 3.8% from last year, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports.

“The labor movement needs to fight for a sliding scale of wages — escalator clauses in every contract, Social Security and all benefits, so whenever prices rise our wages go up automatically,” said Lea Sherman, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress from New Jersey. “And we need a sliding scale of hours — 30 hours work for 40 hours pay — to prevent layoffs by spreading work around as production slows.”

On the same day that September inflation figures were released, the government announced Social Security benefits would increase 8.7% in 2023. But this raise won’t cover the bite of inflation. The announcement was combined with a threat by officials that Social Security will run dry in 10 to 11 years. Unlike the imperialist war budget, the capitalist rulers view it as optional

Slowing trade, production

The World Trade Organization projects a slowdown in global trade. During August exports of U.S. goods dropped 0.3%, and imports fell by 1.5%.

Factories around the world report a decline in new orders from companies abroad. In China, the second-largest economy after the U.S., an export boom that was one of the bright spots for capitalist investment and profits for decades is petering out.

There’s a big drop in cement production in China, where construction starts have declined at an annual rate of over 40% every month since April. This has affected worldwide cement output, which fell 8% in the first six months of 2022.

Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell acknowledged the central bank has “a record of failed attempts to get inflation under control.” He also said there is simply no “painless way” under capitalism to stop soaring prices.

He wasn’t talking about pain for him. His net worth this year is estimated to be \$50 million. He’s talking about pain for you and me. In an Oct. 6 interview, Larry Summers, former treasury secretary under the Clinton administration, admitted he saw no way a significant economic downturn could be avoided. He points to worldwide “inflation shock,” concerns about “Chinese economic performance” and “the ongoing war in Ukraine,” saying, “it is difficult to be optimistic about the global prospect.”

“We are unlikely to achieve inflation stability without a recession of a magnitude that would take unemployment toward the 6% range,” he said.

Whatever happens, workers need to use our unions. “It will take building and strengthening our unions and extending solidarity to other workers, like coal miners on strike against Warrior Met Coal in Alabama and Bakery Workers striking Corn Nuts in California,” said Sherman.

‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

The fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. Send a check or money order payable to the ‘Militant’ and earmarked “Prisoners’ Fund” to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018. Or donate online at www.themilitant.com